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EXCISE

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ACTION SS 70

INFO /070 W

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Dan Ingalls DATE 12/23/81
POSITIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

R 28123ØZ AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5528
INFO RUMTBKAMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3966
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2305
AMCONSUL DANANG 824

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4258

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: SAIGON 3931 Pol 14 Viet S

SUBJ: MORE ON CATHOLIC AND OTHER ITEMS

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[redacted] SAY THAT GSF CADRE ARE COOPERATING WITH LISTS 40 AND 44 BY DISTRIBTION THOSE TWO LISTS' MATERIAL AT SAME TIME THEY DISTRIBUTE GSF MATERIAL. HOWEVER, GSF IS NOT OFFICIALLY SUPPORTING OTHER TWO LISTS AND GS CADRE ARE ADVISING RANK-AND-FILE CATHOLICS TO CAST ONLY ONE VOTE, ACCORDING TO [redacted] AND THAT OF COURSE FOR GSF LIST. IN ADDITION, GSF IS UNOFFICIALLY BUT ACTIVELY SUPPORTING THIEU-KY-[redacted] STATED. FOLLOWING THIEU-KY VICTORY WHICH [redacted] BELIEVES WOULD BE LARGE MAJORITY AND .95 .343 0174-1856, [redacted] EXPECTS GSF TO BE REWARDED WITH AT LEAST ONE HIGH GVN POST.

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3. [redacted]'S VISIT TO BAN ME THUOT OCCURRED TOWARD MEETING OF II CORPS PROVINCE CHIEFS IN NHA TRANG AND MET WITH I CORPS COMMANDER GENERAL LAM AND SEVERAL I CORPS PROVINCE CHIEFS. [redacted] APPEARED TO BE ASSURED OF SUPPORT FROM MOST OF THOSE PROVINCE CHIEFS HE MET.

4. [redacted] STATED THAT THE SIX LISTS [redacted] REPORTED BY SOME CANDIDATES TO BE "GVN-SUPPORTED" ARE THOSE LISTS WHICH WERE ACTUALLY SELECTED BY ARMED FORCES COUNCIL AT RECENT MEETING. THUS, HE ADDED, THOSE SIX ARE THE MILITARY-SUPPORTED LISTS AND NOT "GVN SUPPORTED" LISTS, AND IT WAS THE MILITARY WHO CIRCULATED THE UNSIGNED AND UNADDRESSED UNSTRUCTIONS TO SUPPORT THE SIX LISTS.

5. [redacted] ALSO SAID THAT POLICE DIRECTOR GENERAL LOAN IS SUPPORTING SEPARATE SELECTION OF FOUR LISTS: LIST 8 [redacted], LIST 12 OF THERE VAD, BUDDHISTS LED BY SON THAI NGUYEN, LIST 30 OF CENTRAL VIETNAMESE HEADED BY

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DIRECTORATE MEMBER PHAN KHOANG, AND LIST 41 OF MILITARY OFFICERS HEADED BY LE THANH LIEM. THUS LOAN IS SUPPORTING A LIST OF SOUTHERNERS, ONE OF CENTRAL VIETNAMESE, ONE OF NORTHERNERS, AND ONE OF MILITARY. LOAN IS NOT CIRCULARIZING ANY INSTRUCTIONS TO SUPPORT THESE FOUR LISTS, ACCORDING TO [redacted] BUT "THE WORD IS NEVERTHELESS GETTING AROUND".

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6. HIEN SAID THAT HE SAW GENERAL KY AUG 24 WHO LAMENTED FACT THAT [redacted] CAMPAIGNERS ARE NOT WORKING TOGETHER WITH HIS OWN AND THAT THIEU AND KY THEMSELVES ARE NOT ATTEMPTING TO COOPERATE. KY ALSO NOTED TO [redacted] THAT ONLY ABOUT A DOZEN SENATE LISTS ARE ACTUALLY CAMPAIGNING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE, MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY LIST 2 (LA THANH NGHE), LIST 3 (TRAN VAN LAM), LIST 5 (VU NGOC HAON) AND LIST 8 (GSF). [redacted] APPEARED TO BE DISMAYED THAT KY HAS NOT PROVIDED HIS LIST WITH ANY MONEY. BUT [redacted] FEELS THAT WORD-OF-MOUTH SUPPORT WILL BE SUFFICIENT, IN ADDITION TO CATHOLIC VOTE, TO ASSURE ELECTION. [redacted] SAID THAT LEADING CONTENDER FOR PRIME MINISTER UNDER THIEU-KY IS NGUYEN VAN LOC, ALTHOUGH [redacted] PERSONALLY FEELS THT BEST CHOIC WOULD BE NGUYEN XUAN PHONG, COMMISSIONER FOR SOCICAL WELFARE AND LEADER OFKY'S CAMPAIGN FORCES. [redacted] ALSO NOTED THAT THIEU MAY PUT UP STRONG BATTLE TO NAME NGUYEN VAN HUONG, THIEU'S CAMPAIGN MANAGER, AS PRIMIN.

7. COMMENT: A) [redacted] APPEARED TO BE EXTREMEL CONFIDENT OF HIS LIST'S CHANCES FOR ELECTION, BASING HIS FEELING ON SUPPORT FROM GVN, MILITARY, LABOR [redacted] (IS OFFICIAL IN MINOR UNION) AND, OF COURSE CATHOLICS. ASIDE FROM [redacted] AND [redacted] CA DEPUTY FROM DANANG, REST OF LIST 8 IS MADE UP OF VIRTUAL UNKNOWS. WE ASSUME THAT [redacted] LIST IS IN EFFECT ALREADY

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COMMITTED TO SUPPORT GVN POLICIES IN UPPER HOUSE.

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B. WE HAVE NO OTHER REPORTS INDICATING GENERAL LOAN IS SUPPORTING SEPARATE SET OF SENATE LISTS. (LIST 8 AND 30 ARE AMONG THOSE WIDELY CONSIDERED TO HAVE GOVERNMENT BACKING, BUT 12, AND 41 ARE NOT.)

C. [redacted] COMMENTS ON CATHOLIC SUPPORT FRO THE THIEU-TICKET SHOULD BE READ IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT [redacted] IS BACKING THIEU-KY [redacted] WE EXPECT HUONG TO GET LESS OF THE CATHOLIC VOTETHAN THIEU-KY BUT HIS SHARE MAY BE AS MUCH AS ONE-THIRD OF THE TOTAL CATHOLIC VOTE WHILE THIEU-KY MIGHT END UP WITH LITTLE MORE THAN HALF.

D. [redacted] HAS ALSO TOLD US THAT HE BELIEVES NGUYEN VAN LOC IS KY'S CHOICE FOR PRIME MINISTER BUT THAT THIEU PREFERS NGUYEN VAN HUONG. HOWEVER THERE ARE MANY RUMORS ABOUT THE THIEU-KY SELECTION OF A PRIME MINISTER, AND IT IS STILL VERY EARLY TO DETERMINE WHO REALLY HAS THE INSIDE TRACK. MOREOVER [redacted] COMMENT MAY ZELL BE PURE SPECULATION BASED ON NOTHING BUT HIS OWN HUNCHES.
BUNKER

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